



Afternoon Alert - Monday, May 8, 2017

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## HEADLINES

### Noon news

Most networks led with reports on a fire that broke out in Kita-kyushu, Fukuoka, and burned down an entire apartment building, killing six people and injuring five others. TBS gave top play to the results of the French presidential election.

## INTERNATIONAL

### DPRK officials to meet with former U.S. ambassador to UN in Norway

TBS reported at noon that North Korean officials and a group led by a former U.S. ambassador to the UN are expected to meet in Norway starting on May 8. According to a diplomatic source, Choe Son-hui, the North Korean Foreign Ministry's director-general for North American affairs, and other North Korean officials left Beijing for Oslo on Sunday to hold a meeting with a group led by an unnamed former U.S. ambassador to the UN for several days starting on May 8. The network said the meeting has been planned since last fall and was realized at the strong request of North Korea, speculating that the North Korean side is hoping to obtain detailed information on the Trump administration's North Korea policy. While noting that no one from the Trump administration will attend the meeting and therefore it will not directly lead to any diplomatic negotiations, the network said the North Korean side may send a message to the Trump administration depending on how the meeting goes.

### China called for Admiral Harris's dismissal in exchange for pressure on DPRK

Kyodo reported on Saturday from Beijing on the disclosure by a source involved in U.S.-China relations that the Chinese government has demanded that the Trump administration dismiss

PACOM Commander Harris in return for exercising its leverage over North Korea. While noting that the top U.S. admiral in the Pacific is taking a hard line toward China over its militarization of the South China Sea, the article said it is very unusual for a country to demand the dismissal of a military commander of another nation. The request was conveyed to the Trump administration by Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. Cui Tiankai when President Xi held a summit with President Trump in early April. The USG reportedly rejected the purported Chinese demand. The Chinese side also reportedly asked that Washington refrain from designating it a “currency manipulator.”

### **Analysts approve of Trump diplomacy toward DPRK for the time being**

NHK’s “Nichiyo Toron” Sunday debate program featured a live discussion among the nation’s leading scholars specializing in foreign and military affairs on the rising tension on the Korean Peninsula. All of the participants echoed the view that the Trump administration’s policy of ratcheting up the pressure on North Korea by lobbying China and deploying powerful military platforms, including a nuclear aircraft carrier, has been successful in dissuading North Korea from conducting “serious provocations,” such as a nuclear test or ICBM launch. The participants agreed that momentum toward dialogue appears to be gradually building both in North Korea and the U.S. While speculating that the Kim regime will never surrender its nuclear ambitions in the belief that the dynasty would collapse in the absence of nuclear weapons, Waseda University Korea specialist Lee said Washington may have to compromise on its principle of seeking the immediate denuclearization of North Korea and instead accept denuclearization in phases so as to encourage Pyongyang to come to the negotiating table. Japan Institute of International Affairs Senior Fellow Kotani expressed doubts about whether there is a firm consensus among senior Trump administration officials about what would constitute the “right circumstances” under which the U.S. leader would meet with the DPRK strongman.

- [\*\*Interview: S. Korea’s Moon won’t put comfort women issue at diplomatic center stage\*\*](#) (Jiji Press)
- [\*\*U.S. can’t sustain any longer huge trade deficit with Japan: Ross\*\*](#) (Kyodo News)
- [\*\*U.S. pivot leaves ADB on thin ice\*\*](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [\*\*ADB, JICA to cooperate on health security\*\*](#) (The Japan News)
- [\*\*U.S. urges Japan to continue nuclear power plant construction in U.S.\*\*](#) (Yomiuri)
- [\*\*Finance chiefs of Japan, China, South Korea pledge to ‘resist all forms of protectionism’\*\*](#) (The Japan Times)
- [\*\*Japan, U.S., ROK, EU discuss tougher sanctions on DPRK\*\*](#) (Yomiuri)

- [Cartoon: President Trump and Kim Jong Un](#) (Asahi)
- [LDP titans work to better China ties](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan and China discuss economic ties and cooperation](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Indonesia minister: Japan, China rivalry good for Asian infrastructure](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japanese internal docs leaked in China](#) (The Japan News)
- [5 Central Asian states, Japan condemn N. Korea's actions](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Expand multitiered relationships with Central Asia, eyeing China and Russia](#) (The Japan News)
- [Gov't eyes personnel boost at Taiwan exchange association](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan to hold science and technology conference with Israel in 2017](#) (Nikkei)
- [Senior N. Korean diplomat to meet ex-U.S. officials in Europe](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Caroline Kennedy may run for 2020 presidential race thanks to her experience in Japan](#) (Shukan Shincho)

## SECURITY

### **Okinawa Marine arrested for DUI**

Asahi reported online that the Okinawa Police arrested a Marine at Camp Foster on charges of driving under the influence of alcohol in Ginowan City early Monday morning. Although his blood alcohol level was more than three times the permissible level, the suspect has reportedly dismissed the allegation by saying: "I haven't had a drink in more than 24 hours. I'm no longer drunk."

### **U.S. employs "double standard" in reducing Osprey training**

Saturday morning's Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Shimpo took up the USMC's decision to reduce the number of Osprey drills at Upolu Airport on Hawaii Island after residents complained about hundreds of flight operations there. In basing the MV-22s in Hawaii, the Marines' original environmental impact statement specified that flight operations at Upolu would be limited to 25 per year. However, Hawaii logged more than 800 Osprey and other helicopter operations at the airport in the first three months of this year alone. The Okinawa dailies said the U.S. military is apparently employing a "double standard" since it has refused to curtail Osprey operations in the southernmost prefecture despite repeated protests and complaints from local residents.

- [Japan eyes introduction of cruise missiles amid N. Korea threat](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan seeks to give patrol planes to Malaysia](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Japan rushes to upgrade its fleet of ships](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Correct asymmetric Japan-U.S. alliance through mutual naval cooperation](#) (The Japan News)
- [Omnidirectional 360-degree camera developed to prevent terrorism](#) (Yomiuri)
- [SDF to double ratio of female members](#) (Yomiuri Evening edition)
- [Retired SDF officials land lucrative jobs at defense companies](#) (Akahata)
- [Surveillance tech using AI tapped for Tokyo 2020 security detail](#) (The Japan Times)

## POLITICS

- [Prime minister's schedule on May 6](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on May 5](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on May 4](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on May 3](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister's schedule on May 2](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe takes big step toward dream of revising pacifist charter](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Abe: Keep Article 9 pacifism](#) (The Japan News)
- [Gist of PM Abe's video message on 70th anniversary of enforcement of Constitution](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe to tread carefully in setting path to charter revision](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Timing of referendum key to constitutional revision](#) (The Japan News)
- [Analysis: Abe makes well-calculated announcement of constitutional revision plan](#) (Nikkei)

- [\*\*Abe's constitution revision plan sends ripples through capital\*\*](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [\*\*Editorial: LDP, other parties must aim for constitutional revision by '20 / Strategic approach crucial for Article 9\*\*](#) (The Japan News)
- [\*\*Editorial: Article 9 revisions must be debated with care despite PM's proposal\*\*](#) (The Mainichi)
- [\*\*Editorial: Constitution's philosophy should be realized on its 70th anniversary\*\*](#) (The Mainichi)
- [\*\*Cartoon: Abe and Ishiba\*\*](#) (Asahi)
- [\*\*Cartoon: Constitutional amendment\*\*](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [\*\*Budget Committee interpellations to set direction of final phase of Diet session\*\*](#) (Mainichi)
- [\*\*DP to present counterproposal to challenge "anti-conspiracy" bill\*\*](#) (Nikkei)

## OPINION POLLS

- [\*\*Japanese evenly split on constitutional change, Nikkei poll\*\*](#) (Nikkei)
- [\*\*48% in favor of constitutional amendment, Mainichi survey\*\*](#) (Mainichi)
- [\*\*Opinion poll & results from Mainichi Shimbun\*\*](#) (Mainichi)

## ECONOMY

### **Abe comments on TPP**

Nikkei took up remarks made at the Diet on Monday by Prime Minister Abe, who commented on the idea of effectuating the TPP without U.S. participation by saying: "It is necessary for Japan to coordinate closely with other members and discuss what is best for the country while not ruling out any options." Speaking on the recent TPP chief negotiators' meeting held in Canada last week, the premier said: "A consensus was reached that momentum should not be lost and discussions should be promoted.... Japan is hoping to exercise leadership to create high-level trade rules that were agreed upon by the TPP partners."

- [\*\*TPP may take effect among Japan, 4 other nations: sources\*\*](#) (Kyodo News)

- [TPP's future direction could be decided later this month / U.S. withdrawal poses issues for signatories](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan gears up for Malaysia-Singapore rail tender](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [New growth strategy promotes medical IT](#) (The Japan News)
- [Most nonregular workers unaware of indefinite employment rule: survey](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Pressure rises over tuna haul](#) (The Japan News)
- [Japan steps up push to attract foreign investments](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

## SCIENCE

### [Giant dinosaur skeleton discovered in Japan](#)

Sunday's "NHK Special" reported on the recent discovery of a fossilized dinosaur skeleton in Mukawa, Hokkaido, dating from about 72 million years ago. The program said this is a major discovery because it is extremely rare for so many fossilized parts of a single dinosaur to be unearthed in Japan, which was mainly submerged underwater during the dinosaur era.

- [JAXA starts firing tests on next-generation H3 launch vehicle](#) (Nikkei)

## EDUCATION

- [As Japan's JET Programme hits its 30s, the jury's still out](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Harvard students to offer summer schools to Japanese high school students](#) (Nikkei)

## SOCIETY

### [70th anniversary of Japanese Constitution](#)

Saturday's "NHK Special" reported on the Japanese Constitution, saying that May 3 marked the 70th anniversary of the enforcement of the Constitution. The program reported that more than two-thirds of the members of both the Lower House and the Upper House are positive about revising the nation's supreme law following last year's Upper House election, making it possible for lawmakers to propose constitutional revision. Meanwhile, the program said an opinion poll carried out by NHK in March found that 27% of respondents said the Constitution needs to be revised, while 28% said it should not, and 35% were undecided. The program said while most of the opinion polls in the past showed that those who want to preserve the current Constitution outnumber those who want to

revise it, the number of people who are hoping for constitutional revision is increasing year by year. The program reported on how the people of Japan have felt about the Constitution over the last 70 years, as well as the growing influence of the Japan Conference, which is calling for constitutional revision.

- [Parental abduction victims hold rally to push for joint custody rights](#) (The Japan Times)
- [No. of children in Japan falls for 36th year to new record low](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Cabinet Office adds eight new indices to child poverty index](#) (Mainichi)
- [Sacred men-only island set to be granted UNESCO World Heritage status](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Human rights group issues report on tackling LGBT discrimination](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Gov't to allow family members to join refugee students from Syria](#) (Mainichi)

